

THE  
PLAIN  
WAY OF  
WORSHIP  
AND  
PRACTICE.  
OR,

Directions whereby they that are un-  
learn'd may know how to behave  
themselves, in their Respective  
Duties towards God and all Men.  
*Fitted for the highest Capacities.*

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Ecclesiastes 12. 7. 13.

*Fear God and keep his Commandments, for  
this is the whole Duty of Man.*

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LONDON,

Printed by J. M. for James Allestry,  
at the Rose and Crown in St.  
Paul's Church-Yard, 1670.

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THE  
 SELECTED  
 WAY OF  
 WORSHIP  
 AND  
 THE OFFICE  
 OF

Directions whereby they that are  
 bound may know how to behave  
 themselves in the service of  
 God to the glory of his Name  
 Printed for the Author



Revised by the  
 Reverend and Right Reverend  
 Bishops of the Province of York

LONDON  
 Printed by T. B. for James Knapton  
 at the Bible and Crown in St.  
 Pauls Church-yard 1680



THE  
PLAIN MANS  
WAY OF  
WORSHIP  
AND  
PRACTICE.

Sect. 1. **I** Am a poor Husband-  
man, and many  
times heretofore  
(in the days of my strength)  
have upon occasions, help't  
undry of my Neighbours, at  
B day-

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day-work ; and now, that my Children are grown up, in no better condition then that of a Renter on a Farm, which I manage by their labour and my own ; Yet bred up, I bless my God, not only to read, but to write also, and over and above to some smattering in Learning, as having been once designed to be a poor Scholar in the University. For my honest Father, seeing many ways and many times the great inconveniencies in himself of being illiterate, took great care to prevent them in us his Children ; and being I could read a little more distinctly and readily then any of my Brothers and Sisters, took most delight in hearing me read, and



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and I observing him pleas'd with it, had the grace more and more to please him in this way, and in pleasing him, very much to benefit my self, as since I have found: for in his hearing at leisure times, the Winter-night times especially, I read over not only the single and double Psalter, but the whole Bible also more then once; and thereby got into my head, even when I thought of no such matter, the whole History in a manner of that Sacred Book, to my great delight, as well as profit ever since.

sect. 2. The means, which, being the third Brother, was left me by my Father at his Death, together with that

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which by Gods blessing upon my honest Labours, I have hitherto enjoyed, was and is very small. But such as it was and is, I have been always resolved, by Gods Grace, to make it serve, and to live under it too; which thing I have ever done, I thank my God most heartily. And so have spent my days in great peace and quietness. For when now I write this, I have almost finished the sixty fifth year of my life. And, because I seem to my self to have gained, especially in my later time, some good Experiments as to right believing and godly walking, such, as may perhaps be useful to my Children and Neighbours, when I am gone; I have

have thought good, after due advice, here to set them down: and in the first place, to mind my self as well as them, How I came to a resolution and settlement of my mind, in the several differences, which now pass, in matters of Faith.

*sect. 3.* For in these last thirty years of my Age, by reason of the troubles and distractions amongst us, I have had many doubts about my Religion; and, Fool that I was! thought, by hearing and seeing what every party could say for themselves, to have seen where had been most truth, and there to have fixed. But clean contrary to my expectation, by this means I be-

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came more unsetled then ever. And no marvel ; For how should I, being but one, and no way enabled by Education to search to the bottom of such differences ? How, I say, should such a simple man as I, be able to judge and determine of them ? Sometimes I thought of applying my self to Ministers and Church-men : But they, I saw, were divided among themselves, as much, nay more then any. And, it so happening that in the Parish, where I was a Renter about four and twenty years ago, there were two at one and the same time ; the one an old man, ejected as a Malignant ; and another youngerly Gentleman of the Presbyterian way, who  
was

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was settled in his place by the Committees; I saw cleerly, that to go to either of these, was not to resolve my doubts, but to encrease them; or else, by a blind submission of my understanding, to put an unreasonable end to them. Instead therefore of this way, I began to confer with my Neighbours, and those of the same condition with my self. But I soon saw my Errour, for none of us well understanding the things that we talkt of, we wearied our selves to no purpose, and in the end fell on quarrelling one with another, very unbecomingly and very dangerously. And I remember very well, how that toward the end of the War,

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I happening to talk with the Miller of our Town, who call'd himself an Independent, about the Congregational Way, as he term'd it; and seeming to the By-standers, to be more in the Right then he; without any more ado, this my good Neighbour strikes me over the Face, saying, *The Lord rebuke thee and thy Carnal reasoning*; and so left me. Being, as I said, thus disappointed of my hopes of benefiting my self by Conference with my Neighbours, I fell next, as far as my little stock would reach, to buy the Books that came out; and, where that fail'd, to borrow them. But here I was more confounded then ever; finding new differences started,

started, that I never dream't of, and observing my self still inclined to be of his Opinion, that I read last. Which made it plain to me, that I should never have done my doubting, till I had done with my reading. Being in this perplexity, I in great discontent laid aside all my Books, except my Bible; and fell diligently, as I could get time from my work in the Week-days, and especially on the Lords-day, to the reading of that; Ever, when I met places of remarkable concernment to me in my condition, writing them down by themselves in a paper, that afterwards I might the better consider of them. But though I resolved to confine my self

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wholly to *the Bible*, yet having heard of a Book called *The whole Duty of Man*, and That That Book was designed for the use of private Families, I resolved to look into it, and was resolved after perusal to keep it, because that it did all along, without engaging me to any party, only call upon me to the universally acknowledged Duty of Piety and Virtue; and as I hear, That That Book is so very full, that the most Learned do admire it, so I do find this benefit, that the meanest may understand it.

*sect. 4.* The places, which at first I took especial notice of, and which encourag'd me to a more diligent enquiry, were these; Joh. 5. v. 39.

*Search*



## of Worships Practice. 1.

Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have Eternal Life, and they are they which testifie of me. 2 Tim. 3. v. 15, 16, 17. From a Child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto Salvation, through Faith, which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by Inspiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in Righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good Works. Joh. 7. v. 16, 17. Jesus answered and said, my Doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the Doctrine, whether it be of God. And James 1. 5.  
If

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If any man lack Wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him. Again, Mat. 18. v. 2, 3, 4. Jesus called a little Child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little Children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself, as this little Child, the same is greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven. Having chosen out these aforesaid Scriptures, I seemed to my self to be in a certain and direct way to satisfaction; the word of truth telling me, that, if I searcht the Scriptures, in them I might have Eternal Life;

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Life; be wise unto Salvation, be perfect and thoroughly furnished to all good works; especially, if by a holy Conversation I did the will of God, for then I should know of the Doctrine; and also did pray to God for wisdom, for it is said, that it should be given me; and also did bring the humble temper of a Child, for it is said, *that of such is the Kingdom of God; and he that so humbles himself, shall be greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven.*

Sect. 5. Accordingly setting my self to walk as closely, as I could, to God in Duty, and humbling my self before him, putting aside, as much as possibly I could, all prepossession of  
Opini-

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Opinions or Parties, and making my earnest Prayer, That he, who revealed to Babes those mysteries, which were hid from the wise and prudent (and who was pleas'd to make the first discoveries of his coming into the World to poor Shepherds, and afterwards made Fishermen his Apostles) to shew me also his light and his truth, and direct my goings in the way.

sect. 6. I proceeded therefore very diligently in reading of the Scriptures, still observing my former course of noting down in paper such places, as seem'd likely to contribute to the settlement of my mind. Among which, none made a deeper impression on me, then those

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those which express't the temper of the Gospel, and dispensation of the Doctrine of it; as Ephes. 6. 19. where it is called, *The Gospel of Peace.* Mat. 22. 37, 38, 39. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength; this is the first and great Commandment; And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self. On these two Commandments, hang all the Law and the Prophets.* Rom. 13. 8. *He that loveth another, hath fulfilled the Law. For this, Thou shalt not commit Adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other Com-*

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Commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this, namely, Thou shalt Love thy Neighbour as thy self. Love worketh no Evil to his Neighbour; therefore Love is the fullfilling of the Law. 1 Joh. 2. 10. He that loveth his Brother, abideth in the Light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. Joh. 14. 27. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; Not as the World giveth, give I unto you. Joh. 13. 34. A new Commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know, that ye are my Disciples, if ye have love one to another. Heb. 12. 14. Follow peace with all men and holiness,

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ness, without which, no man shall see the Lord. Rom. 16. 17. I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them. For they that are such, serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. Act. 2. 1. The multitude of believers are described to be with one accord in one place, v. 46. They continued daily with one accord in the Temple. Joh. 18. 20. I spake openly to the World, I ever taught in the Synagogue and in the Temple, whither the Jews always resort, and in secret have I said nothing. Mat. 24. 24. There

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There shall arise false Christs, and false Prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders, &c. Wherefore, if they shall say unto you, Behold he is in the desert, go not forth: Behold he is in the secret Chambers, believe it not. Jude v. 18. 19.

There shall be mockers in the last times, who shall walk after their own ungodly lusts; these be they, who separate themselves, sensual, having not the spirit. Heb. 10. 23. Let us hold fast the profession of our Faith without wavering, &c. not forsaking the assembling of our selves together, as the manner of some is. Joh. 10. 4. When the Shepherd putteth forth his own Sheep, he goeth before them, and the Sheep



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ts, Sheep follow him, for they know  
all his voice; and a stranger will they  
rs, not follow, but will fly from him,  
all for they know not the voice of  
in Strangers. Mat. 7.15. Beware of  
old false Prophets, which come to you  
rs, in Sheeps-clothing, but inwardly  
9. they are ravening Wolves. 2 Tim.  
he 3. 1. In the last days perillous  
er times shall come. For men shall  
ese be lovers of themselves, &c. ha-  
n-ving a form of Godliness, but de-  
he nyng the power thereof; from  
us such turn away. For of this sort  
ur are they, which creep into Houses,  
c. and lead Captive silly women ta-  
of ken with Sins, led away with di-  
n-vers Lusts. 1 Joh. 2. 19. They went  
4. out from us, but they were not of  
th us. For if they had been of us, they  
e- would no doubt have continued  
he with us: But they went out, that  
ep they

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they might be made manifest, that they were not all of us. Heb. 13. 17. Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls. Heb. 5. 4. No man taketh this honour to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. Rom. 10. 11. How shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a Preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent? 1 Cor. 12. 28. God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondarily Prophets, thirdly Teachers, &c. are all Apostles? are all Prophets? are all Teachers?

sect. 7. These Scriptures being thus placed together; which,

which, whether it happen'd by chance, or by some more discerning cause, I shall not enquire; But sure I am, upon the serious reading them over upon a Sabbath-day in the Evening, I seem'd to see much light given in to me towards the clearing of those doubts, which for a long time had perplext and troubled me; which when I perceived, I read them over many and many times, still observing some new matter of profit, which I discover'd not before; and therefore I carried my paper about me, ever and anon, as I could get leisure from my work, both at home and in the field, looking over it, and meditating upon it.

*Scit.*

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sect. 8. From those Scriptures, which express the Gospel temper to be Peace, and Love, and Unity; I soon collected, that the way to advance Christian truth, was not likely to be by disputing and quarrelling, much less by fighting and killing: Nay loving one another, being given for so infallible a mark, that our Saviour says, *All men shall know his Disciples by it*; from thence I took up a stedfast resolution, to secure my own Interest at least in this respect, to trouble no body with my own Opinions, nor disquiet them for theirs, unless haply, they first should attempt upon me. For then I never fail to say what I can for the Laws, and

and for the walking of me and others according to them; This particularly; That he, who hath the Laws of his side, hath always something of true Religion to alledge for himself: for instance, *Rom. 13. Let every Soul be subject unto the higher Powers, &c.* and *Heb. 13. 17. Obey them that have the rule over you, &c.*

*sect. 9.* From the advice, to mark them who cause divisions, and to avoid them; I did set my self to consider, how it came about, That, whereas heretofore there was great Unity among Neighbours, and consent in matters of Religion, now on the contrary, there was so much strife and dissention both in publick and private.

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private. It was manifest enough, that the speaking against the former settlement, and endeavouring to make alterations in the Church and State, were the occasion of these divisions: And therefore that they, who were active herein, did cause them beyond all doubt, and were the persons, who according to the Apostles direction were to be avoided: that is, The Precisians and Puritans, as they were heretofore called, and now Sectaries and Fanatiques. But on the contrary, observing these to be a sort of Godly men, and who were painful in the Ministry, and zealous for Reformation; I was a long time stagger'd, how possibly  
such

such precious men should fall under the remaining description of the Apostle, that they serv'd not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly. And in this difficulty I remained, till my bargain proving too hard, I was forc'd to look out for another ; and happen'd to take a Farm in a Parish, where the Benefice was not scandalous, and where the Minister could not be so ; I mean, the Means being no more then what the Lay-Parson would allow, The Minister, who was then there, was suffered to read the Common-Prayer every Sunday, and was not troubled and ejected for so doing. For by Gods wonderful good Providence, thus there it fell out.

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In the beginning of the year 42. The Curate of the place deceasing, the Impropriatour, being a wealthy, and withal a very honest man, and one that with his Family feared God with all his heart, was resolv'd by Gods Grace to have a man of Parts, as well as Piety, to be his Curate; and to that purpose, having a very good Farm in the Parish, besides the Parsonage, declared his resolution to allow towards worthy serving of the Cure, besides the Parsonage-house and Gardens, and Orchards, full fourty pounds *per annum* without any deduction or payments at all. God directed him to a man, who every way hath answered and still doth  
answer



answer his godly desires; One, who having all along found his Patron and Parish most firm and respectful to him, being, since the Kings Return, offer'd a much better Living by the Bishop, thought fittest to excuse himself, and to continue his Station. Which the worthy Bishop did, it seems, take so well, that since, he hath given him a dignity to his Curacy; and all now here is just so, as most desired to have it. So soon therefore as hither I came, the whole Neighbourhood, I perceived, were much more quiet and truly honest, then that was from which I came; And, though there was no great talk of godliness, there was more love and peace,

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and the power of it, then where our young Reformer preacht up his new lights and the Scepter of Christ. After this, looking more narrowly, I observ'd that, where there was a good living, the old Minister generally was put out as a Malignant; but where there was but a poor Curacy (as with us, though a very considerable Parish for largeness) No body was concern'd at all to preach up Reformation there; As also, that these Reformers, and as they call'd them, Godly Ministers, though they talkt against Drunken Cavaliers, would yet make no scruple to come from the Lecture on Market-days, as red as Roost-Cocks; and,

and, to my seeming, not far from being disguis'd in Drink. Whereupon I began to suspect, that all was not gold that glister'd ; and, upon enquiry, found, that most of them, who had put others out of their places for being scandalous Ministers , were themselves so one way or other ; and from being poor Curates, or broken Tradesmen, got themselves into the best Livings of the Country, never minding those which were of little value, nor the saving of the Souls of them, who liv'd in such places ; Nay , instead of doing the work of Ministers of the Gospel of Peace , blowing the Trumpet of War, encouraging to Rebellion against the

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Lords Anointed, and Cursing *Meroz* with bitter Curses, for not helping in that quarrel. In like manner, those, who in the Neighbourhoods were the Leaders and Teachers to them, who were Anabaptists, and of the Congregational way, with the rest, I found them all in a manner to be Men, who had either left their Callings, or their Callings had left them, and were many of them charged to have been very ill Livers, nay to be so still, and had most of them been Rebels against the King. So that I thought, I had now great reason to make use of the Apostles Caution, and to avoid them all; Even the very best of them; for even these for certain

tain were guilty of living contrary to the known Laws of the Land, and of using and enjoying many things, as their own, which yet by those Laws were not theirs, and so of living and allowing themselves in a known sin. So that, though otherwise they were and are very able and highly gifted Men; Yet who may deny, but, that, as dead Flies do corrupt the most pretious Ointment: So these, as to some they may seem, but little follies, did blemish them amongst us, who were, and yet are some of them, in reputation for wisdom & Eccles. 10. 1. *Thou only O God, art Holy! Thou only art Just!* But no one is there, not only of thy seemingly

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best, but even of thy very best Servants in holy Scripture, who has been without somewhat noted, wherein he was culpable; even for this cause doubtless, lest we should esteem of any man, above that which becometh.

*sect. 10.* From those Scriptures, which noted the first believers gathered together in one place; *our Saviours and his Apostles* resorting to the Temple, as also the directions not to look for *Christ* in the desert or secret Chambers, nor to believe or follow those, who pretended there to shew him; Observing also the Character given of those, *who separate themselves and would seduce others; That they should be*  
*Mock-*

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*Mockers*, such as derided all besides themselves, *that they should come in the last times* (that is, these since *Christ*, which we now live in, as well as those since *Christ*, that were before us) *and should walk after their own ungodly lusts, being sensual, having not the Spirit*, that is, though they pretended much to the Spirit, were indeed discover'd to be sensual; Here I seemed to myself, as by a voice from Heaven, to be warn'd against Conventicles and separate meetings; Especially, when I proceeded to read over the directions, which followed in my Paper, To hold fast the profession of Faith without wavering, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves,

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*selves, as the manner of some is; and also the Parable of the Shepherd and his Sheep, which I found of constant use with our Saviour. For hereupon I could not but think, that they were Wolves sure in Sheeps Clothing, and not Shepherds, who, instead of guiding, would destroy the Sheep; and whose business it was, to drive them as far as they could out of the Fold, nay to pull down the Penn it self. But, when I came to the description, which S. Paul gives of the last days, and the perillous times, which should then fall out; when men should be lovers of themselves, covetous, boasters, proud, and the like, yet, notwithstanding all this, have a form of godliness,*



ness, creep into Houses, and lead  
 Captive silly women, laden with  
 sins, led away with divers lusts;  
 There seemed to me nothing  
 more left to the description of  
 these Teachers of our times,  
 unless he should have called  
 them by their several names;  
 And therefore instead of won-  
 dring at the numbers, which  
 fell off to them, I satisfied my  
 self in the Account, which S.  
 John gives; That they went out  
 from us, because they were not  
 of us; and their very going  
 out did make it manifest, that  
 they were not all of us.

sect. II. Lastly, from those  
 scriptures, which command to  
 obey those, that are over us, and  
 have spoken to us the word of  
 God; and to submit our selves  
 to

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to them, since their authority is not from man but God; and that *no man taketh this honour to himself, but he who is called of God, as was Aaron*; and that it was equally impossible to believe without a Preacher, and to preach without being sent; and that God gave *Apostles* in the first or highest place; in the second, *Prophets*; in the third, *Teachers*; And that all are not to be *Apostles*, nor *Prophets*, nor *Teachers*; In these things, I plainly saw the Establishment of a Ministry, and an Obligation to obey them. I saw also the Necessity of a lawful Calling, and that none might presume to go, till he were sent; and farther, I saw that there was Order in the Mini-

Ministry ; some were to be before and above others ; some were to send, and others to be sent.

*Señ. 12.* And of all this I was the more perfectly convinc'd , when I consider'd the miserable state, the Nation was brought into, by disobedience and neglect in the former particulars ; For, as our not valuing our Lords command of keeping Peace, and Love, and Unity to each other, certainly brought on a dreadful War (wherein, as all other conditions of men were involv'd, the poor Husband-man was the greatest sufferer ; He being expos'd as a prey to every Rascal got on Horse-back, and in one night to see devoured

### 38 The Plain Banishment

voured all that was provided for the sustenance of his Family and Cattel, for a whole year: besides, the intolerable insolence, to which he was subjected, not to be suffer'd to be Master, nor scarce to be in his own House): So our not regarding the remaining duties, of marking and avoiding these, that caus'd our divisions, nor of keeping to the publick assemblies, nor of obeying them, who are over us; was the manifest ground of those distractions in the Church, which heretofore rent it in pieces, and we at this day do groan under. For, whoever remembers any thing of the former times, cannot be ignorant, *that men first dislike some*  
*part*

part of the publick worship, then separated themselves from it; and then, to justify their separation, dislik't more; and at the last, left nothing in a manner of Christianity to themselves, besides the name and profession of it. For instance, I remember about the beginning of the Long Parliament, A great cry was made against *superstition in the Church and service of it*; and first, the *Litany* was spoken against; after that, the *Catechism*; then, the *Communion Service*; then, *Set forms of Prayer in general*; then, *The Creed*; and lastly, *The Lords Prayer it self*. In the mean time those men, who upon these pretenses deserted the Church; first declared themselves

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themselves to be *Presbyterians*; then went forward to be *Independents*; after that grew *Anabaptists*; then *Quakers*, or *Ranters*, or *Atheists*, or lastly (for thither all these several motions tend) *profest Papists*. By this means the *Plain Country-man* had no guidance to *Salvation*, no *Catechism* to instruct him in his duty to God and his Neighbour, no *Prayers*, no *Sacraments* to comfort and support his Soul, but was bid to pray *ex tempore*; (which he observ'd, the *Preacher* himself could not do, without talking *blasphemously*, or at best *impertinently*;) and to lay hold on *Christ*, 'To make sure of Christ;  
Have an In-being with Christ;  
To be Godded in God, and  
Christed

*Christed in Christ*; and a deal of such *Canting Language*, which profited nothing towards the great duties of the *Gospel, Faith, Repentance, and Newness of life.*

Se<sup>c</sup>t. 13. Moreover, I saw in some houses and had certain Information of many more, That, when plain illiterate people, Rulers of their respective Families, whether Men or Widows, attempted this way of *Ex tempore Prayer*; They finding they could not do it to the satisfaction either of their Hearers or Themselves, Being many times at a perfect stand, not able to say any thing; Sometimes forced to vain Repetitions, and many times speaking non-sence and Blasphemy;

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phemy ; By these and other like mis-adventures, discerning they could not keep up their Family-Devotion by the Gift, have kept it up no way at all, but have let it wholly sink ; And since, as those *that live without God in the World*, have had no office of Piety at all in their Families ; Nay have wholly quitted the Duty of Prayer, as to themselves in their own persons.

*Seet. 14.* Upon the whole matter, having for many years together weigh'd and consider'd the before-mention'd particulars, It seems to me as manifest as the Sun at Noon-day, *That, as the prime Original cause of all our miseries and distractions, was and is the malice*



lice and uncharitableness of our hearts; so their immediate Cause was and is, Our neglect of the publick Service; and, to speak in a word, Our dis-regard of the Common Prayer of the Church. For with the dislike of that, all our Calamities began, and we must sure never hope to have an end of them, till we lay aside that dislike, and till, as was and is the great design of it, *We in England do make it, next the Bible, our Sovereign Guide for Worship, Private as well as Publick.* A Guide so sure, so ready at hand, and so faithful, and so easie in all things to be understood, that by it, people as they may, so also they ought, as occasion may be, to admonish and guide

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guide their Erring guides. For it is, I plainly find, but a wretched mistake in some, and a base slander in others; That in *the Church of England*, many Parishes are left to a very simple Guide; One many times, who is so far from being able to guide others, that he cannot, or at least does not, tolerably guide himself. No, no, our good Mother *the Church of England* is not so regardless of her Children. For so far is she from leaving them to any such unworthy Guide, that she leaves them not, to the guidance of any single person, though never so able and worthy, much less to any one, who is neither Able nor Worthy. But how then? why truly to the  
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the tried and thoroughly-weighed guidance of her self only in the *Liturgie*, confirmed by the *Best, and Fullest, and Highest Power of this Land*. And let me tell you, *Children and Neighbours*, and I pray mark it well; By reason of this Excellency of it, I verily perswade my self, and not for any the least real Evil or Untruth, that in it can be noted, It is, *that it hath incurr'd the mortal hatred and displeasure of all Sectaries whatsoever*; As well knowing all of them, *That if this Guide have its due Reverence, Their weaknesses and wickednesses can never, no not with the weakest, pass for Truth and Piety*, as now they do but with too many, and those too  
of

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of the soberer sort. For, when once, even the Ablest have laid aside their observance due unto it, They are open, I daily see, to the most foolish and heinous Impressions, that are. And further, Then, as one prophesied four-score years ago, Things of principal Excellency shall, upon all occasions, be bitten at by men, whom God had endued with Graces both of Wit and Learning for better Purposes.

*sect. 15.* I am not so foolish to hope, that these or any other words of mine will be much heeded by those, whose Eternal Interest sure does in very deed oblige them both to heed them, and also to be perswaded  
by

by them. However, having undertaken to give an Account of the Experiments, which I have made in matters of Religion, I plainly set down my Opinion, with the grounds of it, and shall proceed to declare in like manner, *What is my Practice as to Worship, both Publick in the Church, and Private in my Family.*

sect. 16. First, I shall set down the several Scriptures, which I drew together concerning Prayer; and upon which I guide my self in the Duties of it, both Publick and Private. 1 Theff. 5. 17. *Pray without ceasing.* Ephes. 6. 18. *Praying always with all Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all*  
perseve-

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perseverance and supplication  
for all Saints. Luke 18. 1. &c.  
Jesus spake a Parable to this  
end, that men ought always to  
pray, and not to faint, saying,  
There was in a City a Judge, &c.  
Luke the 11th. v. 1. &c. The  
Disciples said unto Jesus, Lord  
teach us to pray, as John also  
taught his Disciples. And he  
said unto them, when ye pray,  
say, Our Father, Mat. 21. 13.  
My House shall be called the  
House of Prayer. Mat. 18. v. 19.  
20. If two of you shall agree on  
Earth, as touching any thing,  
that they shall ask, it shall be  
done for them of my Father,  
which is in Heaven. For where  
two or three are gathered toge-  
ther in my name, there am I in  
the midst of them. Mat. 26. v.

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39. Jesus fell on his face and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt, &c. He prayed the third time, saying the same words. I Cor. II. 4. Every man praying or prophesying with his head covered, dishonoureth his head. Mat. 6. v. 6. 7. When thou prayest, enter into thy Closet, &c. Use not vain repetitions. I Cor. 14. 15. I will pray with the Spirit, and will pray with the understanding also. Jam. I. v. 6. Ask in Faith, nothing wavering. I Cor. 14. v. 40. Let every thing be done decently in order.

sect. 17. From the Scriptures, which command to pray continually, to watch thereunto;

D

Pray

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*Pray always, and not faint: As also from the Parable of the unjust Judge, and importunate Widow; I easily convinc't my self of the great and weighty Concernment of the Duty. But besides, it being manifest, that there are other Christian Offices to be performed, as also natural Ones, such as are to Eat, and Drink, and Sleep, &c. 'Tis manifest, the Literal meaning of the words is not intended. So I resolv'd it reasonable, the Text must not be evacuated, to mean nothing. And if so, that the least, which could fairly be imagin'd, was, daily and constant, though intermitted, returns of Prayer; which, whether they were to be with the frequency, which*  
*David*



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*David* mentions, when he says, *Seven times a day will I praise thee*; or that other of the same Prophet, *At Morning, and at Evening, and at Noon-day will I pray unto thee*; must be determined, not only by the Devotion, but by the leisure and opportunities of every particular Person; excepting where the Laws of those, who are over us in the Lord, have determin'd it to our hands.

*Self. 18.* From the Injunction to pray in the Spirit, compared with our Saviours teaching his Disciples to pray, as *John* taught his Disciples, that is, by a Form; as also our Saviours own Practice, who prayed saying the same words; I

D 2

learnt,

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learnt, That to pray by a Form was very well consistent with praying by the Spirit; for doubtless our *Saviour* pray-ed by the Spirit; And also that the same words may be repeated (which is a consequent of Forms) without using vain repetitions. So that all those things, which are talkt concerning stinting the Spirit, are empty Bugbears to terrifie weak people; As indeed the fathering *Extempore Effusions upon the Holy Spirit, are impudent falsities, and a lying against the Holy Ghost.* Nay farther, having seriously consider'd of this matter, it appear'd to me, That, whatever persons would say for praying by the Gift, It is only praying by

by the *Gift* to him that conceives them; for to all the Company they are *Form*. For who sees not, that as much tied and stinted all the hearers are by the words spoken *Ex tempore*, as if they had been the words of a Book? And therefore seeing that in the use such prayers cease to be *Gift*, and come to be *Form*, it had as good, nay much better, be a *known Form*, which the *Assembly understood and could go along with*; then a new and unknown one, which no body can, or perhaps ought to say *Amen* to. I shall not add, That, what is usually called *Gift*, is generally nothing more then *Confidence, Use, and a Fluency of speaking*. But had it been,

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or were it a miraculous power, such as the *Gift of tongues or miracles*, I know no reason, that people should value themselves or others on that Account; those dispensations not at all implying Sanctifying Grace. And our Saviour has said, *He will not know many of them, who have done miracles in his name, and in his name cast out Devils.* Farther I observ'd, that, since our Saviour has promis'd to the *Assembly of Christians*, who shall agree together as touching any thing, which they shall ask, *It shall be done for them*; Certainly a most effectual way to secure an Interest in this promise, is to agree not only of the things to be desired, but of the

the

the forms and words also, in which it should be desired, unless we are so stupid to think, that the Spirit is not stunted by agreeing upon the matter, but is stunted by agreeing upon the words. Add hereunto, Seeing now, (blessed be God!) Experience has undeceived a great many, and sufficiently satisfied they are of what is greatest truth, That variety and effusions before others, (whether in Church, or Family, or elsewhere) thought to sick and dying men, even then having flesh and blood about them, as well as to others, they may be more graceful, yet to our God not more pleasing, nor for our selves more effective are they,

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then *Forms*; having all things necessary in them, and supposing the like fainess, fixedness, and fervency of devotion under these, as under those; This being so and so, why do we not watch and oblige our hearts to greatest devoutness and constancy in the best form of worship, that is? and why do we not deny our selves the pursuit of that, which we erroneously call *Better*, and more Graceful, and more to our Ministers shewing their Reverence and Respect to us; when, for want of crossing our selves in this one point, we every where see not only Peace and Charity, but Faith also, to be most strangely decayed and undermined? for, how shall  
we

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we deny our selves in all other things, if we will not in this one, always most proper, but now most necessary, Object of that great *Gospel-Grace*, Self-denial?

*sect. 19.* From *our Saviours* falling on his Face, and kneeling in Prayer, and *the Apostles* direction to men, to have their heads uncovered, and to do all things decently and in order; I learn, what were the humble postures and demeanours due to Prayer. And that therefore they sure were furiously mad, or intolerably profane, who took away *Ceremonies*, and thereby decency, from Religious Worship, and made slovenly rudeness, a Consequent of Godliness. Nay farther,

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having ponder'd long, and seriously consider'd of the matter; It appeared to me that those, who oppos'd *Ceremonies* upon pretense of Superstition, were themselves the while, very guilty in that particular; it being the same restraint and breach upon Christian Liberty, to oblige ones self or others not to do an indifferent thing, as to be obliged by another to do it; but only for this, that in the one Case a man is only *Superstitious*; in the other, he is *Disobedient*, and *Schismatical*, and *Superstitious* to boot. Nay further yet, while the dissenter pretends a fear of giving scandal to weak Brethren; that is, such, who disobey the Laws of those,



those, that are over them in *the Lord*, as also the *Civil Magistrate*; He gives a real scandal to those that are strong, who do their duties, and walk orderly. And if his example prevail upon them, must answer both for their disobedience, and his own.

*sect. 20.* Having upon the grounds aforesaid come to a settlement of my Opinion in the *Duties of Religion*, I found my self concern'd accordingly to guide *my Practice*. Which, in what manner I have done, and continue to do, and by *Gods* help, shall endeavour to do to my lives end, I come now to declare. And this, with the same freedom and plainness, that I have used in my former discourses. *sect.*

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sect. 21. And first I make it my business *upon the Lords Day and Holydays, and their Eves, as also on Wednesdays and Fridays,* when the *Litany* is read, if possibly I can, to come to Church at the beginning of Divine Service, or rather, if I can, a little before the beginning, that so I may prepare my self for the great Duty of Prayer; Calling to mind such sentences of Scripture, as seem most proper to stir up Devotion; such as those of the Psalmist; *I was glad, when they said unto me, We will go into the House of the Lord, I had rather be a Door-Keeper in the House of my God, then to dwell in the Tents of Ungodliness. O how amiable are thy dwell-*

*dwelling*s, *ô Lord of Hosts* ! and the like ; as also those other, which I have before set down concerning Prayer. When the Service begins, having put my self into the posture of Prayer, I attend carefully to the Minister, repeating distinctly the Responses, and with earnest fervour and aloud saying, *Amen*, at the close of each Collect. Also in the Psalms and Hymns, not only lifting up my heart in thankful acknowledgments to God for his mercies, and concluding with affectionate attribution of *Glo-*  
*ry to Father, Son and Holy*  
*Ghost*, but also, according as I am commanded, *Psal. 95. 2.* making in this part of worship a joyful noise to him ; *There,*  
where

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where alternation is in use, by repeating every other verse: where not so, if I have a Book before me, by reading all along with the Minister, so loud at least, as to be heard by those next me. If no Book, then out of his mouth and my own memory, framing, by good attention, all or most of the words and sentences, as he most leisurely utters them to the understanding of all the Congregation. A way, which they also, who are wholly unletter'd, may, if they will, take for worthy joyning with the Congregation in this part of the worship; and which some such are known to have done so successfully, that, after long and much heeding, whensoever they

they have heard any verse quoted out of *the Psalter*, they have been able to say, to what day of the Month, though not to what *Psalme*, it did and does belong. When the Lessons are read, I hearken with Reverence and Attention, considering that *the Almighty God of Heaven and Earth* speaks to me, and that not the descants of men talking out of the Pulpit, but this indeed is the Word of *God*, and the Preaching of it; which, if it work not upon us, whatever we may think to the contrary, most true it is (for our Saviour has said it), *We would not be perswaded, though one should rise from the dead*. Such value therefore I have for this no less ancient, then

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then true Preaching, Act 15.  
21. *Moses preached, being read  
in the Synagogues every Sab-  
bath day*) that I think the Ser-  
vice very compleat, though  
there happen to be no Sermon.  
But if there be one, I very  
gladly attend unto it, not min-  
ding so much the skill or elo-  
quence of the Preacher, as  
the Duties he recommends;  
never taking upon me to judge  
or discommend the meanest  
performance, not only because  
all such doing has much of sin  
in it, but also because some  
good may be gathered from  
the slightest discourse, that can  
be made. Besides, I do often  
charge my self to take heed of  
that Mother-mistake, where-  
with so many both heretofore  
have

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have been, and still are, carried away and abused ; *That the great end of going to Church, is to Hear and Learn ; Or, That That is the Rightest Way and Truest Church, where there is most and most Powerful Preaching.* For whoever they be, thus opinionated of, and thus affected to, the under-end of Religious Assemblies, constant to the publick Meetings , I daily see, they will not long be ; Be the Minister of the place, never so sound and powerful in his Preaching and Catechizings, and in his Life never so innocent, blameless, and inoffensive. But when the great Ends, are by people believably and religiously thought on ; such as, *Prayer*  
*and*

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*and Praise*, and the chief Sacrifice of *Praise, the Communion*, and keeping up *Christian Unity and Communion*, and hearing *the Word* distinctly read, as a part of Worship (there being no truer Worship and Honour to God in this World, then from the Heart to acknowledge and believe that *the Bible is the Will and Word of the Living God*) and the like: Then, be the Preaching and Catechizing never so mean, yet, for these perpetual and never failing Ends, Meet Believers will; and in their meetings give that Glory to God and benefit to their own Souls, which in them God hath so mercifully designed to Himself and Them.

sect.



*Sec. 22.* After the Service is finish't, I reverently depart out of the Church, and being return'd home, employ what vacant time I have, in reading my self, and in hearing my Servants and Children repeat their Catechism, and read the Scriptures and other good Books, especially those Scriptures, which they heard read in the Church, the Lessons, and Epistle and Gospel for the day; Because more conformable are they to the mind of God and his Church in this part of the publick worship (The Lessons, Epistle and Gospel) who in the Church do not read them along with the Minister, but only hear them read, as a part of Worship; And at home only,

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only, read them their selves;  
Always looking out, and pitching  
upon, and being affected  
with some one or other special  
sentence, for their special  
pondering all the week after.  
For I do not think the business  
of the Day dispatch't at  
Church, or in two or three  
hours; Because, though *the*  
*Judaical keeping of the Sabbath*  
*be now out-dated,* Yet the Reason  
of the Service (the dedicating  
a part of our time to  
God, who gives us that and all  
things else) is now of as much  
force, as ever; nay now has  
stronger Obligation, forasmuch  
as the remembrance of  
the New Creation is super-  
added to the Old; and the deliverance  
from the Servitude  
of

of the spiritual *Pharaoh*, is to be acknowledg'd by us *Christians*, beyond the Rescue from the *Ægyptian Bondage*, which the *Jews* were concern'd in.

*Señ. 23.* But if the *Lords Day* or other *Festival of the Church*, which requires a more solemn attendance, happen to have also the *holy Sacrament of the Eucharist* administred upon it, I fail not to partake thereof; and accordingly, *By Meditation and Prayer and holy Resolution, and such short Examination of my self, as presently I shall expresse, endeavour to prepare my self for the Reception of it;* considering what befel those *Guests*, who, being invited to the *Supper of their Lord,*

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Lord, excus'd themselves up-  
on the Account of their secu-  
lar employments; Remem-  
bring also, what became of  
him, who did come, but *with-  
out a Wedding Garment*; and  
how unreasonable a thing it is  
to take care for our daily  
bread, which nourishes the  
body, but have no regard of  
that bread, by which our Souls  
are nourished to Eternal Life;  
Especially, since it was the dy-  
ing precept of our Saviour,  
That, *as often* (which certainly  
would be at least thrice in  
the year) *as we did it, we  
should do it, in remembrance  
of him.*

*sect. 24.* In reference to  
private Devotion, besides,  
that every night before Bed-  
time

time I pray with my Family,  
 part of the Evening Service,  
 according to *the Liturgie* ;  
 (Our mean condition allowing  
 vacancy for that, though it do  
 not for any other solemn Re-  
 turns of Prayer ;) I *singly* ad-  
 dress my self to seek the Face  
 of God, after this manner. So  
 soon as I awake ; I lift up my  
 heart in short Ejaculations to  
 the Divine Goodness, who has  
 brought me to the beginning  
 of the day, desiring his blessing  
 in all the occurrents of it ;  
 And having slipt on my  
 Cloaths, before I go out of  
 my Lodging-Cote, I kneel me  
 down, and in the hearing of all,  
 that are awake (on purpose  
 that they also, when up, may  
 not be abashed to do so too ; and  
 indeed

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indeed use will make them constant, and think, it is expected from them by man as well as God) in the hearing, I say, of all that are awake, I pray over *the Lords Prayer, the Collects for the Morning, for the Kings Majesty, for the Royal Family, for the Clergie and People, and for all conditions of men*, with the short Collect that follows it, and the General Thanksgiving; Remembering it to be a particular duty of Christians to pray *for Kings and all in Authority; and unto Prayer to add Thanksgiving.*

sect. 25. Having thus, acceptedly, I verily believe, from a man of my condition, bless'd and arm'd my self for the business of that Morning;  
I

I set forward, with what speed I can, to my employment, and continue at my labours till Break-fast time ; which taken not without some short Grace, to my self at least, both before and after , ere it be Noon, I make to my self leasure for a second and more large return to Prayer, which I use according to the Liturgy, adding now the Psalms for the Day, which I omitted in the Morning. And I the rather *keep to a set Form*, not only upon the Grounds above produced, but also, because I have found by manifold experience, That, when I have left my self to such Prayers and desires, as I have been able to put forth upon the sudden, I have still

E                      been

## 74 The Plain Mans way

been apt to be very broken, imperfect, loose and disorderly in them ; and by running out into Impertinencies , to spend more time in my Offices, then I could well spare ; (though upon a just Account shorter, then they should be.) And yet to a *set Form* I am not so resolvedly addicted, as not upon emergent Occasions, and when I find my Soul enlarged, to pour it out, as God by his Grace enables me. But I say, ordinarily and of course I use none but Forms. And the Form I use is *the Liturgie of the Church*, not only because it is the best, for its matter and composition, that I can find ; but thereby to own my self a member of that Holy Com-



Community, and also to gain the Advantage of joining in the same Prayers, and at the very same time, with many thousands, who throughout the whole Nation present their Supplications before the Throne of Grace, in the same words with me, as but now was said, and at the same time. For though in going over this Office, I am all alone, yet by reason of that Article, *The Communion of Saints*, I do sure properly enough say *our* and *our*, and *we* and *we*, and *us* and *us*, in all the other Prayers, as well as in that Prayer of Prayers, *The Lords Prayer*.   
on sect 26. Instead therefore of a Clofet, at the time afore-said, I repair into some private

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place in or about my House;  
 Or, if I happen to be at work  
 in the Field, some unfrequent-  
 ed Hedg, or Brake, or Copse;  
 And there, either kneeling, or  
 standing, or lying down, as I  
 may (for I find all these po-  
 stures approved in Scripture  
 for Prayers and Praises) I be-  
 gin my devotion with one or  
 more of the sentences of Scrip-  
 ture at the beginning of the  
*Liturgie*: And proceeding to  
 the Confession, which I repeat  
 with the greatest humility  
 and most affectionate concern-  
 ment, that I can; I wholly  
 skip over the Absolution, as  
 not to be pronounced by me to  
 my self or any other, but to  
 me and others only by the  
 Priest. But for the Lords Pray-  
 er,

er, the Versicles annext, with their Answers, and *Gloria Patri*; these I look upon as the most weighty parts of my task; and do therefore with the greatest heats, that I can raise my heart unto, present them to my God, in the behalf of all others, as well as of my self and Family. Whereunto when I add the *Venite* and *Psalms* for the whole day, I do not only read them with attention so as to understand and consider them as I go; but my great care is to pray them over, and with earnestness of heart to offer them up to Heaven in Acts of Worship; or, in one word, to worship by them. This done, I proceed to acting my Faith upon the Creed, and to pray-

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ing over the remaining Prayers according to the Order of the Church, save only that I omit the Prayer next before, *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*, as being to be said by none but by a Congregation of two or three at the least ; and where there are Versicles and Answers, I, having none to answer, make one very short, but very pithy and effective Prayer of them. All which, unless I foolishly give my self leave to trifle and play with aliene and vain thoughts, is fully dispatcht in one quarter of an hour, which, as it is a considerable time to a poor Husbandman, so may it well be made up by industrious labour in the rest of the day.

sect.

*sect. 27.* And what I thus practise my self, I also recommend to my Children and Servants, remembring, That among the Reasons given by God for his Blessing of *Abraham*, and making him a great Nation, This is particularly assigned, That he would teach his Household to fear the Lord. To them therefore I allow always one quarter of an hour after Break-fast, charging them at that time to get themselves into some privacy or other, and there seek the Face of God, as they can, if they cannot, as is best. And if thus favoured and guided, they do nothing in very deed of what they are directed to do, themselves are in all the fault;

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I and my business are free from it.

*sect.* 28. And, whereas Country people not used to the power of Godliness, are apt to be asham'd to be observed to retire unto, or much more to be deprehended in their Devotions; I have not fail'd often to mind them, that it is better by far, to endure the Lip and Leering of Fools for a day or two (which, when they have once or twice despised, they shall be troubled with no more) then the never ending shame and confusion, which will be the portion of the Ungodly in Hell. And as to those, who could not read, I have by all means encourag'd them to get by heart, either all  
or

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or as many of the Prayers of the Church, which are of constant use, as their memories would retain; assuring them, that their Souls are as pretious to God, and were redeemed by as great a price, as the Souls of the learnedst Doctors, or greatest Princes; and ought to be as dear to themselves; *The whole World not being a valuable price for one single Soul.*

*sect. 29.* And here I cannot but with greatest thankfulness of heart recount my past and present Condition. For, about forty years ago, when I was able to make one at all business, I was advised to keep a Teem, though my own poor Estate were not the fourth.

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part of a Drift ; Yet this course being most advisable, I undertook it, and was thereby necessitated to keep Servants ; with whom I dealt, as others did ; that is, suffer'd them to do even what themselves list'd, as to what concern'd their Souls. And then seldom or never could I get any thing done, except my Eye were over them. And if I or my Wife chanced to be abroad, at our return we were likely to be welcom'd home with the news of some ill accident or other from their negligence or disorder. But after that it pleased God to direct me into the way, I am now in, of practising my self, and engaging my Household to the  
Ser-



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Service of God, I find my own much better performed. For, if I or my Wife or both of us go to a Fair or Market, and leave work to do, we are sure to find it well done, the Cattle and little Ones, when we had them, and House in as good Order, as if neither of us had been from home. And, if some of them happen to loyter a little, I can then discern them to be ashamed and sorry for their neglect, and more angry at themselves, then I can be with them for it. So that in many temporal respects, I have found it most true, that Godliness is great Gain, and the only way to have good Servants, is first to make them good Christians.

*Sect.*

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*sect. 30.* I have hitherto render'd an Account of my daily practice in the Duty of Prayer, both as to my self and Family. Besides this, whilst I am at my work, I cease not by short Ejaculations to lift up my heart unto God, desiring him to have mercy on me, to encrease my Faith, to teach me to number my Days, and the like. And the more to engage my mind to good thoughts and a Conversation in Heaven; whatsoever business I am about, I recollect those Reflections, which the Spirit of God in the Holy Scripture hath made upon that particular work and business. If I am Plowing, I call to mind the gentle Curse laid upon *Adam*,  
of

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*of eating Bread in the sweat of his Brows ; The Parable of the Sower, and the Kingdom of Heaven compared to a Field ; The command of the Prophet, to break up the fallow ground of the heart, and not to sow among Thorns, and the like. When I am with my Cattel, I remember that saying of the Prophet, The Oxe knoweth his Owner, and the Ass, his Masters Crib ; that of David, Be not like to Horse and Mule, which have no understanding ; That of our Saviour, I am the good shepherd, and the like. And indeed, it so falls out, that there is no one part of the Husbandmans Employment, which is not some way or other own'd in the Holy Scripture ;*  
As

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As if it had been the purpose of Almighty God, to encourage that despised and laborious Calling, by expressing the great mysteries of Godliness, in Parables and Similitudes taken thence : Our Saviour himself not disdaining to be call'd a *shepherd*, and God the Father, a *Husbandman*.

*sect. 31.* All this, especially upon Sundays and Communion days, that I and all my Family, may the more acceptedly and successfully perform, I lay the greatest charge I can upon myself and them, for these two things; First, That in none of our Worship, Publick or Private, we be wanting to ourselves for raising our inward Worship, by obliging ourselves

selves to greatest care and continual practice of the outward, in prostration of Body, in bended knees, in hands and eyes lifted up to Heaven, in sighs and groans, in tying ourselves, sometimes at least, to say the very words of all the Prayers and Praises, after the mouth of the Company, and other like outward, both advantages and indications of inward Devotion; As well knowing that a great number of Scriptures, besides those before, many by way of Example, and not a few also by way of Rule, do call to us for this Prudence: Nothing being more necessary to be averted in religious Offices, than their degenerating, for want of these

Enliven-

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Enlivenings, into heartless  
dispirited Recitations, or,  
mere Lip-labours: Or, which  
is much worse, into being at  
Church, but not being at  
Prayers. Besides, plentiful ex-  
perience hath given this in for  
a most certain Truth, that,  
though sometimes there may  
be outward Devotion, when  
there is no inward, yet never is  
there inward Devotion with-  
out some part or other of the  
outward. Secondly, That,  
every Sunday-morning, espe-  
cially if it be a Communion  
day, we do not any of usly the  
longer in bed, because it is  
Holy-day, but rather go to bed  
a little the sooner on the over-  
night, on purpose that being  
gotten up a little the earlier  
that

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that Morning, and having dispatcht all our works of necessity and Common Honesty, we may every one of us get himself or herself into some Privacy before Prayer time; And there having by Faith set our selves as in the presence of God, every one to do as I do; that is, First I offer up unto God the Lords Prayer, at the end of every Petition thinking of my self chiefly, if not only; Then, the Prayer before the Commandements, changing only, *the thought of our hearts*, into, *the thoughts of my heart*; and, *that we may perfectly love thee*, into, *that I may perfectly love thee*: And this done, I do most humbly rehearse every Commandment;

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ment; and after the rehear-  
sal, say, *Lord have mercy upon*  
*me*, in respect of my violations  
of this first, second, third,  
&c. Commandment, whatso-  
ever they are or have been;  
And for the time to come, in-  
cline my heart to keep this  
first, second, third, &c. Com-  
mandment, in the full extent  
and true meaning thereof: Be-  
thinking my self, and calling to  
mind, and in words uttering, as  
I can, my latest breaches of  
every Commandment; And  
after all, *Lord have mercy upon*  
*me, and write all these thy*  
*Laws in my heart, Lord I be-*  
*seech thee.* Then, one of the  
Prayers for the King; And  
after, I do the best I can, to  
act my Faith upon the Nicene  
Creed,



Creed, by a most steady and believing rehearsal of it, thus; *I believe in one God ---- And in one Lord Jesus ---- And I believe in the Holy ---- And I believe one Catholick and ---* Concluding with this Scripture Ejaculation; *I believe, Lord help my unbelief; And give unto me I beseech thee, O Lord, That I may in very deed believe in God the Father, as the maker of me and all the World; In God the Son, as the Redeemer of me and all Mankind; and in God the Holy Ghost, as the sanctifier of me and of all the Elect people of God; And that I may know Christ Jesus, and the Power of his Resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto*

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unto his Death, that I may attain unto the Resurrection of the dead, Amen. And these things done (in about half a quarter of an hour) I make no doubt at all but this is real examining and acting my Faith and Repentance; Sure I am, as much as the busie life of Country people, ordinarily and for constancy can attain unto. After this, we all betake our selves together to the Church, so as to be sure to be there some little time before the beginning, as before I have noted; not any being suffer'd to stay behind, unless one perhaps, to look to the house and keep the pot boiling; as heretofore to look to the little ones; And this (to note this also by the way)

way) upon this consideration; Because, whilst very Infants, I have ever thought it best, they should be kept at home; And that, because, the Children and little ones, that are invited to praise the Lord, are not mere Infants, I conceive, but such Children, as those in St. *Matthew*, who the Text plainly saith, cryed in the Temple, saying, *Hosanna to the son of David.* *Mat. 21. v. 15.*

*sect. 32.* Having given this Account of my Duty to God; I am next to speak of that great remaining part, which concerns my Neighbour; Whether he be my Superiour, the Prince and Magistrate; Or Equal, my friend and fellow Subject.  
And

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And concerning the former I was guided by these and the like Scriptures; *My Son, fear thou the Lord and the King, and meddle not with them that are given to change: for their destruction shall rise suddenly, and who knoweth the ruine of them both?* Prov. 24. v. 21. 22. *Curse not the King, no not in thy thought.* Eccles. 10. 20. *Fear God, Honour the King.* The King, as Supreme; and Governours, as those that are sent by him. 1 Pet. 2. v. 17. 13. 14. *Ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for Conscience sake.* Rom. 13. v. 5. *They that resist, shall receive to themselves damnation.* v. 2. And when I consider how many misguided Souls, have not only

only been engaged in open Rebellion against the Lords Anointed, spilt the blood of others and their own in that unhappy quarrel; but continue to this day justifying themselves in every thing they did; As I am astonisht at so desperate perverseness; I also find my self oblig'd to lift up my heart with all thankfulness to God, who has withheld me from being led into this temptation; and throughout the late troubles, kept me back not only from lifting up my hand against the late King, but from owning or abetting that side and party, even when it flourish'd most, and seem'd at once to be both great Godliness and great Gain.

sect.

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Sect. 33. As to my demeanour towards my fellow-Subjects, the Scriptures, which guide me, are such as these; *Seek Peace and ensue it.* Psal. 34. 13. *If it is possible, as much as in you lieth, live peaceably with all men.* Rom. 12. 18. *Not rendring Evil for Evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise blessing, knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit blessing.* I Pet. 3. 9. *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another.* Rom. 13. 8. *Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it.* Prov. 3. 27. *Whatsoever ye would, that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them: for this is the Law and the Prophets.*

phets. Mat. 7. 12. Set apart thy Tythes with gladness. Will a man rob God? But ye have robbed me. But ye say wherein have we robbed thee? In Tythes and Offerings. Mal. 3. 8. Let no man defraud or over-reach his Brother in any matter, because that the Lord is the Avenger of all such. 1 Thess. 4. 6. Ballances of deceit, an Abomination to the Lord. Prov. 11. 1. Let every man wherein he is called, therein abide with God. 1 Cor. 7. 24. Mind not high things, but sort with them of low degree. Rom. 12. 26. Thou shalt not go about a Tale-bearer. Levit. 19. 16. Nor busy-body in other mens matters. 1 Pet. 4. 15. &c.

sect. 34. The Gospel being  
F called

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called the Gospel of Peace, and our Saviour, as the Prince thereof, making his first proclamation by the mouth of the heavenly Host, That he was come to bring Peace to Earth, and good will towards men; his life and precepts still inculcating that Duty; and his dying Legacie being still the same largesse of Peace; I fully convinc't my self of the importance of that Duty, believing it a sad exchange, which now adays men make with such industry, who lose the certain possession of Unity and Peace, upon the expectation and pretence of truth. Charity may indeed cover a multitude of sins; But the knowing the Masters will, without



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without a faithful doing of it, will only occasion the infliction of more, and more heavy stripes. And in the Apostles comparison, knowledge puffeth up, but Charity edifies, that is, buildeth up: The Encrease of the one being to sickness; of the other, to strength and use. Almighty God is himself one; has given us one Mediatour between himself and men, the man Christ Jesus. There is likewise but one Faith, one Baptism, one Common Hope; and all Christians he has made one by the neereſt tie of Unity, to be members of the ſame body, under Jeſus Chriſt the Head. And certainly we have little value for our profeſſion,

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little sense of our Saviours honour, or of our own duty and concern, if we make a rupture here, and break through all those bonds of Unity, preferring a party beyond the whole, and the Being of *Paul, Apollos,* or *Cephas*, rather than of *Christ*.

*sect. 35.* Next unto Charity I esteem Justice, which is Duty so sacred, that my Alms is robbery without it; The best actions which are founded in injury, being but such sacrifices, as were offered in *Tophet*, where murder was the Oblation.

*sect. 36.* A most common, but yet certain kind of Injustice, is the non-payment of Debts; A Theft, which has  
gene-

generally this aggravation, that breach of Faith and promise is annex to it. I therefore rather want, then borrow any thing, which I am not certainly enabled to pay ; And do rather undergo any inconvenience, then fail of being punctual to my Engagements, whether they be the standing ones, of Rent unto my Landlord, and payment of Common rates ; or accidental ones, of payments at day upon chaffer or bargaining, or other Obligation by Bond or Specialty ; And to this end am very sparing in undertaking any thing in reference to the future, as not knowing what a day may bring forth.

sect. 37. Among my Debts

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I reckon that most incumbent duty of doing all the good I canto all persons, with whom I have to do; esteeming it a great unkindness to my self as well as to my Neighbour, to forfeit the benefit and advantage of doing a good turn; but a plain injustice towards God who has made us Stewards and Dispensers of his good things; and will punish the laying up our Talent in the Napkin, as if we had lavisht it away in riot and excess.

*sect. 38.* The short and standing Rule both of Justice and Charity, I take to be the doing to others, whatsoever we would have done to our selves: Then which nothing can be more equal, and nothing  
more

more applicable upon all emergent Accidents ; every the meanest Capacity knowing its own desires and expectations, and thereby also its own Duty; for instance, if I in my extremity would not be destituted, let me see, I never turn my face from any poor man : If I desire my self to be plainly and Christianly told of my mistakes and misadventures, let me be so true to the Fame and Reformation of my Neighbour, as not to tell others, but the offenders themselves only of their faults and failings: If I am not well pleased to be born down with loudness, impudence and confidence, let me never go about to baffle, amaze and stun any body else. If

I am grieved to be made story  
and town-talk, let me do no-  
thing towards making any man  
else so, &c.

*Isa. 39.* The payment of  
Tythes seems, I know, gene-  
rally a great burthen, but I  
esteem it a great priviledge.  
It was the Villany of *Cain* to  
offer unto God, the worst of  
his Encrease; but he must be a  
strange wretch, who grudges  
the offering even of That.  
Upon reading of the Scripture  
I easily discern, that the Jews  
in their first and second Tyth-  
ings, their first Fruits, their Ca-  
sual expiations for legal im-  
purities (not to reckon their  
sin offerings and free Oblations  
and Vows, as also the Cities  
with their Territories belongs

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ing to the Priests and other attendants upon the Altar) made a far more liberal disposal of their goods for Gods Service, then is now expected from us Christians. And yet the Apostle says that under the Evangelical Dispensation, as well as the Jewish; They that wait at the Altar, were to live of the Altar. And, however we think the meanest, most sordid pittance enough for them, he resolves them worthy, not only of single, but double honour. In short, seeing God gives me all, and requires a tenth, it must be a great baseness in me to refuse him that. The mere munificence of Benefactors gave them to God and his Church; The Law of

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the Land has made them the Inheritance of the Church; No man ever purchased the Propriety; No man pays rent for that, with his other nine parts; so that I must be injurious to God and Man, and therewith to my own Soul, so far as theft and sacrilege can make me, if I withhold my Tythes.

*sect. 40.* In making bargains I avoid all Art and Subtlety; neither discommend what I would buy, nor praise what I would sell; much less tell lies, or, what is the worst of robberies, using false weights or measures, most justly stiled an Abomination to God.

*sect. 41.* My vocation being Husbandry, I wholly apply my  
self



self to it ; knowing well, that, since I am no Statesman, it is not for me to trouble my head with State-affairs, or pick quarrels with my Superiours, whom Christianity commands me to obey and pray for. And since I am no Divine, I may not take upon me to determine of Questions in Religion, or to controul the Minister, who is over me in the Lord.

*sect. 42.* Being Master of my own Family only, I may not meddle with the transactions in my Neighbours; but must make a great Account at the Day of Judgment, for my self and those depending on me; and therefore need not clog my self with other unconcerning Reckonings. In my  
own

own Family indeed I am bold to see, that all live according to their Condition; not suffering my Sons to be dress't up with Ribbands and Baubles, fitter for my Fore-Horse, than them; nor my Daughters to be Hooded in Black-bags, or sprue'd up with Scarfs and Laces, as if they were not to sell their Butter and Cheese, but themselves at the Market. I know well that they, who are solicitous for their out-side, have generally very little care for their better part within; and it is most certain that, the next thing to Vanity, is Vice; Extravagance in one kind multiplying it self to others, and ending at the last in the most open irregularities. Nor is  
it

*sect.* 43. And whilst I adhere to my calling, without departing from it, and avoid the diversions of meddling in the vocations or concerns of others; I also decline, as much as honestly I may, these more legal Avocations of being employ'd as a Parish-Officer, a Constable, Tything-man, Church-Warden, and the like. Where, besides the trouble and expence of the Employment, there is a great hazard of displeasing my Neighbours, and a greater of offending Almighty

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mighty God, for in them I must take a Corporal Oath to present all misdemeanours and offences, that come to my knowledge; who keep disorders in their Houses; who frequent such places; who absent themselves from Divine Service; and in a time, when there are so many Papists, so many Fanaticks, Atheists and Drunkards in every Township and Parish, it is impossible with any pretence to truth or common honesty, to bring in the usual return, that all things are well and in good Order. Not many years since, I was chosen Church-Warden, and seeing that there was no remedy, but serve I must (it being just I should bear my share of

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of burthens); The first thing I did, was to declare openly, that, I would return all persons without favour or connivence, according to my Articles. Nor was I worse then my word; presenting the rich as well as the poor, the Popish and profane as well as Fanatick Recusant: And was for my pains rail'd at as a busie, strait-lac'd, Hypocritical Rogue, an Un-neighbourly, troublesome fellow, with a great deal of the like ill Language. But notwithstanding, I live, I thank God, still, and am as well thought on in the Parish, as those, who for quietness sake, forswore themselves, and chose rather to partake of other men sins, then of their  
their

their displeasure or ill will.

*señ. 44.* But with much more willingness I undertook the Office of Overseer of the Poor, and the constant trouble which went with it; considering that, since by reason of my low condition, I had little means of being charitable and contributing to the relief of those, that were in distress; I had the greater Obligation, not to be sparing of my care and pains in their behalf. And one particular way, wherein I did befriend them, was, to pay the several allowances punctually at the weeks end; for I observ'd that disappointment of a day or two was a great oppression to them, who had  
only

only from hand to mouth, and who must either beg or steal, if they happen'd not to have their relief at the time, when it was due; and therefore I rather wanted money my self, or borrow'd it for them, then see them lack. And, when I consider that the proceeding of the day of Judgment is described by our Saviour, as depending upon the having fed the hungry, cloath'd the naked, and visited the sick and otherwise distress'd; I cannot but resolve it of exceeding great importance, to be enabled to make a plea to the performance of these Duties: The having not done them to our Neighbour, being by our Lord expressly said, The  
Refusal

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Refusal of them unto him himself.

*sect. 45.* Though hitherto I have in many words given an Account of my own Actions and Concernments, which may justly lay me open to the charge of Impertinence and Folly (The speaking of ones self being generally an effect of want of Wit :) Yet, if I find any good done by this Attempt, I have some other things to offer to my Generation, About hearing of Sermons, About Intercessions, Fastings, and Thanksgivings, About seeking God upon special Occasion ; concerning the use I make of the publick Ministry in my Sickneses, and such like. **For** I most willingly profess,



of ~~Unlearned~~ Practice. 115

profess, I am a Fool; and, if I see cause, will yet further be a Fool, for Christ his sake, and for the good of his little Ones. And thinking it reasonable that the discourfings of an unlearned man, should have the same effect among those of the same Level, as the reasonings of great Clerks among Scholars; and hoping that God, who magnifies his strength in weakness, may give a blessing to my slender endeavour; I cannot repent of the trouble I have given my self in this Adventure, till I shall discern it utterly unuseful to Plain Country men, such as I am, and for whom, if not only, yet chiefly, it was designed. In the mean time, I  
hope

hope Almighty God will accept the Will for the Deed, and forgive the failing not only of this writing, but of my whole Life too. The which Prayer I have reason with the greater fervency to make, being now drawing towards my long home, and speedily to render an Account of whatever has been done or omitted by me, since I came into the World. At which great Day, it will not be enquired how Rich, or how Honourable, but how Religious and Honest, I have been; nor so much how Prudentially, as how Piously, Justly, and Soberly I have lived. God grant, I may then appear faithful in the Husbandry of that Talent, which  
hath

hath been committed to my Trust; That, though I am an unprofitable Servant, yet my defects being supplied by the merits of my Saviour, and mercies of my Judg, I may be set at the right hand with the Innocent, though simple and unwary Sheep, and admitted into the Joy of my Lord, &c.

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*F I N I S.*

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